

for new technology. The good news is that there is a growing interest in the private sector (e.g. Building Owners and Managers Association) in private-public partnerships to make the technology work.

- And last but not least, “Facts make a difference.”

Col. Joel Leson: “Interoperability and Standardization for First Responders”

“It isn’t just the fire service. Everything the chief (Chief Coleman) said is as true, in many instances, in the police service as it is in the fire service.” The police service is no better off at implementing the technology. Of the 20,000 members of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), seventy percent are made up of departments of 25 or less. While the large departments can handle the new technology, the small departments have problems.

In a study of EMS, fire, and police needs [“Incident Command Technology Systems for Public Safety,” report prepared for DOJ, NIJ Office of Science and Technology, by The Center for Technology Commercialization, Inc., August, 2002], the following list of first responder (fire and police) technology needs was given:

- An effective command and control system for managing critical incidents;
- Communications systems to allow all first responder disciplines and agencies to speak to each other;
- Coordination of resources;
- Safety systems including tracking and monitoring of personnel;
- Access to real-time, accurate information;
- Broad-based training and scenarios; and
- Access to a clearinghouse or database of available technology solutions to assist in managing critical incidents.

The implementation of these needs will only be successful if we can get it to the street and are willing to spend the necessary money. As Chief Coleman stressed, only a few communities have reached a level of expertise where they can use the technology properly or afford it.

What do we need to fix the problem? Money is the first step but it must be spent wisely. We must get into the threat assessment business in order to figure out where to direct the money. The second step is education. The IACP is preparing to use workshops to start the educational process. The goal is to get people to the point where use of technology is second nature. “We have to make sure that every young person that goes on a payroll is funded and trained.” We need to develop a complete transparency in operations between fire, police, and EMS.

Mr. Don Hewitt: “A Responder Knowledge Base for Police and Fire”

Don presented an overview of the Responder Knowledge Base (RKB), a trusted knowledge base for emergency responders, online at www.rkb.mipt.org. Prior to the development of the RKB there was no reliable unbiased source of practical information about the performance of equipment needed for safe and effective response to emergencies. The RKB was developed as part of Project Responder, sponsored by the Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT). Funding is also received from the Office for Domestic Preparedness, Department of Homeland Security.

The mission of the RKB is “*To provide Emergency Responders, purchasers, and planners with a **trusted, integrated, on-line** source of information on products, standards, certifications, grants, and other equipment-related information.*”

The RKB has been designed to provide Emergency Responders with a single source for integrated information on current equipment, including organizing information such as the InterAgency Board’s Standardized Equipment List (SEL), the Authorized Equipment List (AEL) from the Office for Domestic Preparedness, and National Terrorism Response Objectives from Project Responder itself. By integrating this information in one location, responders, vendors, standards organizations, training facilities and grant making organizations will have a trusted first source to begin answering questions such as:

- What equipment is out there?
- Has it been certified?
- To what standard?
- What training is needed to use it?
- How do I pay for it?
- Whom can I talk to who has used it?

In operation, the Knowledge Base is based upon the concept of direct relationships, or "knowledge links" among various types of content items. These content types include the InterAgency Board Standardized Equipment List, the ODP Authorized Equipment List, Products, Standards, Certifications, Grants, Training, and Project Responder’s National Terrorism Response Objectives. Registered professional responders also have the ability to contact other responders who have had operational experience with listed products, or volunteer to share their own experiences.